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## THE TRIBUNE

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### STATE AND EDUCATION.

#### BRITISH CONSTITUTIONAL ASSOCIATION'S VIEW.

The third and concluding session of the first annual conference of the British Constitutional Association was held at Oxford on Saturday under the chairmanship of Mr. Mark Judge.

Dr. P. Arthur Sibly, chairman of the council of the Private Schools Association, gave an address on "The State and Secondary Education," in the course of which he said the nation was going in a direction diametrically opposite to that recommended by the Royal Commission of 1894, which urged that the sphere of the State as to higher education should be strictly limited, and that there must be no interference with private enterprise. We were within a measurable distance of that all-embracing State system against which the Commission had issued a warning. The competition of rate-aided schools in which the fees charged were but a third of the cost price of the education given drove one after another of their public schools to seek Government grants, and destroyed public schools not eligible for these grants.

A paper on "The Family versus the State" was contributed by Miss Charlotte M. Mason (Ambleside), who expressed the view that in our zeal to do well we must not encroach upon the rights and duties of other persons; notably, upon "the duty of most persons, however poor, to support their own children." The children who could properly be regarded as children of the State were orphans, children whose parents were criminals by profession, or insane, or under the periodic insanity of habitual drunkenness, or victims of the slothful habit. Probably one object of the British Constitutional Association, Miss Mason observed, would be the delimitation of the powers of the State to supersede parents in the care of their children. Sentences by the State implied State control, and State control demanded the sort of differentiation possible in Germany, where a record was kept of every villager and town dweller, and of his conduct in each employment.

The Hon. P. Wyndham moved a resolution deprecating "the tendency in modern legislation to weaken the responsibility of the parents for the maintenance and education of their children," and opposing "the assumption by the State of control of secondary schools and the general provision of higher education at the public expense." Mr. S. H. Harris (Brighton) seconded the resolution, and it was carried unanimously.

Resolutions were also passed protesting against the compounding of rates by the owner, against State old-age pensions, against the feeding of school children out of the rates or taxes, against the demoralization of the poorer labourers by the endowment of unemployment, and against Socialistic legislation.

T.O.









